

ENGL148 Week 2 Edapt - Preparing an Argumentative Research Proposal

This week, your edapt lessons will focus on the overall concept of argument writing and the beginning elements of creating an effective argument.

You will focus on

- the misconceptions and truths associated with arguments,
- argument essay topics and goals, and
- prewriting and preparing for argument writing.

Also, you will complete a scholarly research tutorial and learn about APA citation and reference writing. As you work through these lessons, be sure to take your time and take notes.

Mod 1: Argument Misconceptions and Truths	
A real argument is calm, grounded in solid logic and credible support, and considerate of opposing viewpoints.	
Argument Misconceptions Versus conflict Argument Versus Conflict Argument Versus Fighting Why / "I prefer to avoid conflict." We hear this a lot, especially in an era in which "arguments" about important issues flare up and become heated in venues like social media. We see anger, even name-calling, in what should be intelligent opinion-based, fact-based debates. Versus fighting	

We also, from a young age, equate "arguing" with "fighting" in general. Our parents arguing, for example, may have upset us badly, and "arguments" between peers at school may have turned nasty and resulted in horrible bullying and worse. Even in our college classes, differing opinions are often taken personally, resulting in hurt feelings and defensiveness.

The Effects of Misconceptions

Unfortunately, when we spend years exposed to all of these negative expressions of "argument," we easily end up:

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- stifling our authentic thoughts
- believing that expressing a stance will lead to backlash from others
- seeing opposing opinions as scary or as a sign of anger and meanness

Everything Is an Argument

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Given that we've learned so much about the scary, anxiety-inducing, angry forms of argument, why would we wish to embrace argument, debate, and rhetoric in writing at all?

The answer is simple:

We need to learn about how to build a strong argument because almost everything is an argument.

Why We Learn to Build Strong Arguments

In short, we learn how to build strong arguments to:

- think critically
- consider other viewpoints with a more open mind
- explore the range and history of thought and breakthroughs to which argument has contributed
- be respectful and helpful in debates, no matter how small or large
- problem-solve

Most importantly, we learn how to effectively influence powerful, positive changes in our immediate environment and the world.

In fact, as Goering and Thomas (2018) assert, "Argument is about conversation, about engaging in a dialogue, not simply about having right and wrong positions" (p. 26), and that is what we do when we interact with others and with our own thoughts and dilemmas.

Effects of Powerful Arguments

Indeed, anger has been found to be the strongest bonding emotion on social media, meaning that we tend to bond with strangers who share our anger (Fan et al., 2014). It's no wonder that we have become weary of anger disguised as debate.

The best way to stay calm and apply true logic in a world with "angry noises" flying around us is to learn about effective approaches and steps involved in effective arguments. We can then navigate the loudness of the empty opinions in the world and make our voices heard and remembered.

Argument Changes the World

The Value of Argument in the Re

Combating "argument for evil" by building solid, influential arguments clearly can make an immeasurable impact on humans on a large scale and on the immediate humans around us.

In fact, making our voices heard while employing solid argument strategies is one of the best and most meaningful, satisfying experiences we can have in our personal and professional lives.

Carefully study the images to the right to be reminded that well-formed, well-presented arguments do change the world.

Being exposed to angry forms of argument is valuable, too, however. Often, life events that contain conflict can lead to better critical thinking and choices in our lives.

To illustrate: Learning critical thinking can help when choosing a profession or discovering a talent that makes a difference in the lives of others. Robert R. Stains, Jr. (2003), for example, notes health care trainees who "describe life events that are linked to their 'calling' to become practitioners" (p. 475).

Examples include a student who "speaks of discovering a knack for peacemaking when thrust into a fight between friends" (p. 475), while another describes "struggling with family members over a dying relative's health care and wishing for better facilitation skills" (p. 475), prompting a passion for specializing in end-of-life health care.

Now think about everyday situations where words retain the power to both hurt and help us: court trials, recommendations for jobs, schools, and scholarships, and the language of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, and ageism. You can influence change in your immediate time and place through argument—good argument—that employs the effective methods we learn in college.

At this time in history, many voices are being heard through well-thought-out arguments and good critical thinking, avoiding weak logic and making a true difference.

One example is "Latina activists and artists," who are "leading dynamic campaigns, projects, and grassroots movements to end systems of racism that are crushing the working poor, immigrants and families, LGBTQ, and women of color" (Morales, 2018, p. 1).

Argument Topic Examples

Another reason argument scares us is that when we are asked to write in the argument mode, we have a hard time developing a topic.

Some argumentative topics might be:

- a specific focus on one specific behavior, like smoking, in one specific way (e.g., local government public bans, federal taxing, or advertising limitations)
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- your stance on it)
- a stance on a specific involuntary admission procedure for one particular population (eldercare or mental health, for example)
 - making a specific life-saving procedure or drug more accessible
 - a particular issue involving the rights of minors and privacy and/or permissions in medical care

***Note:** These are examples to help you understand argument topics in general; in any of your actual writing assignments, you must follow the instructions for the types of topics you may use.

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Finding Ideas for Argument

Your online library will have a Points of View database, for example. Once you are in your online library, you will go to "Databases" and then to "Points of View."

Another credible place to scan many current debatable topics is the website speechanddebate.org.

Refer to these, put them in notes

Note: Three important words of caution about tools like Points of View and speechanddebate.org:

1. Keep your current assignment in mind.
2. Most importantly: Do not copy from any idea-generating area, like the library or the internet. You should use these as tools to get your brain moving, and you should not write anything word-for-word nor "borrow" support for any argument. Formulate your own ideas from the experience, and write those down yourself, fully developing all parts of your argument yourself.
3. With this in mind, please consider going to and reviewing plagiarism.org and your institution's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Argument Writing Situations

In most situations, you will already have some parameters for your argument project.

For example, you may be asked to problem-solve at work, or you may be attempting to receive a refund for a poor product.

In your academic writing, you will often be given a broader scope and will be asked to narrow it to a topic within that scope, or theme.